

Dear Temple B'nai Torah Families,

*Pirkei Avot* states that a wise person is “one who learns from everyone.” This year, there will be a lot of extra learning. We will be learning about each other, we will be learning about what the past has to offer, and most importantly, we will be learning about what the future expects from us.

Jewish Education is a team effort. With your cooperation, your children will explore who they are and how they fit in the larger Jewish picture. We will guide them, we will give them the texts and the structure, but for it to stick, we need your help. Ask questions, hang artwork, take pride in the young ladies and gentlemen they are becoming.

This handbook is by no means comprehensive. It contains basic rules and expectations. But like life, sometimes they can be fluid. So please, use it as a guideline to know what is and isn't part of TBT's Mission.

It is my honor to be a part of the TBT community, to learn from all of you, and to share my wisdom. Let's continue to learn from everyone. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have at (516) 221-2370 or at [sgordon@tbtwantagh.org](mailto:sgordon@tbtwantagh.org).

B'Shalom,  
**Morah Sheryl**

# SUSANNA E. HEIMAN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

*You are your child's first Jewish educator. We thank you for trusting us to be your partner in this sacred purpose.*

*As partners we can create diverse, meaningful and enriching Jewish educational experiences for you, your family and your children.*

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Susanna E. Heiman Religious School is to nurture, educate, and motivate our children to become active lifelong members of the Jewish community. Our course of study encompasses Jewish ethics, culture, history, Israel, and Hebrew. Our students will participate in various aspects of our Jewish tradition including Torah, prayer, ritual, holidays, and social action.

## Our commitment to Jewish Learning is based on:

### **TaNACH (Torah, Prophets and Writings)**

Students read and explore Torah stories, apply the lessons and teachings to daily lives, and learn to write and deliver D'var Torah and midrash.

### **Celebration and Observance of Holidays and Festivals**

Throughout the year, students participate in and learn about the traditions, practices, celebrations, and meanings throughout the cycle of our Jewish calendar.

### **Community practice and observance through T'fillah (prayer)**

Students read and develop an understanding of individual prayer themes, the order of T'fillah services, and how to lead their peers in such a service. They are also included in various services and celebrations in the TBT community at large.

### **Hebrew Decoding**

Students learn the Hebrew alef-bet, including all vowels, in order to be able to decode and read along with prayers, Torah, and haftarah readings. They are also taught to write in both block and cursive.

### **Our Jewish heritage through Jewish History**

From Israel to Eastern Europe to the Holocaust, major time periods, themes, and milestones in Jewish history are explored.

## CLASS SCHEDULES

Grades K, 1, 2	Sunday 9:00am – 11:25am
Grades 3, 4, 5	Sunday 9:00am – 11:30am <b>and</b> Wednesday 4:30pm – 6:15pm
Grade 6	Sunday 9:00am – 11:30am <b>and</b> Wednesday 6:30pm – 8:15pm
Grade 7	Monday 6:30pm – 8:15pm <b>and</b> Wednesday 6:30pm – 8:15pm
Grades 8-12	Monday 6:30pm – 8:15pm

## CURRICULUM SUMMARY (K-7)

### **K-1<sup>st</sup>-Everyday Judaism**

Kindergarten and first grade students are introduced to Jewish aspects of everyday life using art, music, poetry, and any number of fun activities to help them connect to being Jewish, even at this early age. They are also introduced to Jewish holidays with a special focus on Shabbat. Finally, students are exposed to basic Hebrew vocabulary, including Shabbat and holiday blessings.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade- Torah & Synagogue**

Second grade is all about Torah and the synagogue! Each class, students will learn about that week's Torah portion to begin to learn about biblical stories and characters. Students will also spend time learning about the people, places, and objects in Temple B'nai Torah, while getting to compare and contrast these different aspects of our synagogue with those of other congregations around New York, the United States, and the world. Students will also be regularly exposed to the Hebrew aleph-bet, learning a new letter each week to get them ready to learn to decode and write in third grade!

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - Jewish Time**

This is the year that students become proficient in decoding and writing in Hebrew! With this new skill, they will be able to begin to learn prayers and new Hebrew vocabulary. Throughout the year, students will also focus on "Jewish Time." Through fun, experiential learning, 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders will practice the custom and traditions of each holiday from Rosh Hashanah to Tu B'Av, and by doing so, gain understanding of how and why each holiday occurs at different times throughout the year.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade- Intro to Israel**

The main focus in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade is on Israel. Students will learn about the history of Israel as a country, and its modern significance to Jews. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade is also a very special year as students learn how to write Hebrew in script to further foster a connection to modern Israel and bolster literacy and letter recognition. As their literacy skills increase, they will also study the prayers that are included in the Shabbat Evening service, allowing them to easily participate on any Friday evening!

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Grade- Torah and Midrash**

5<sup>th</sup> Grade students return to Torah study in a whole new way! As they relearn many of the well-known stories and characters from the Torah, students are asked to think creatively and critically about what they hear and see. By doing this, students learn to write midrash and d'var torah, which helps them to connect to Torah on a personal level. In Hebrew, students will learn to decode the words and gain understanding of the meaning of the prayers that are included in the Shabbat morning service. The introduction and mastery of these prayers will help students immensely as they inch closer to the beginning of their B'nai Mitzvah studies.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade- Jewish Values and Jewish Life Cycle**

In the final year before B'nai Mitzvah, students will begin by learning about middot, or Jewish values. They will be asked to explore what makes these values Jewish, and how they can be applied to everyday situations. Students will also learn about important Jewish Life Cycle events from Brit Milah to B'nai Mitzvah to the Jewish mourning process as they prepare to become adults in the TBT community. In Hebrew, the students will study the prayers included in the Torah service, as well as the choreography that goes along with each one. They will also spend time learning the concluding prayers of the Shabbat service. Finally, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class will spend approximately four sessions learning the basics of Torah trope with Cantor Timman to help them along as many of our students begin B'nai Mitzvah tutoring.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade- Holocaust Studies, Founders, and Conversational Hebrew**

As many of the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade students become B'nai Mitzvah, we feel it is extremely important to broaden their understanding of key pieces of Jewish History. To that end, students spend roughly half of the year learning about the Holocaust through specially designed lessons intended to teach the subject in a gentle and meaningful way. Students also spend time preparing presentations that will be incorporated into the congregation's Yom HaShoah service at the end of the year. For the second half of the year, students spend time learning about some important individuals and Jewish leaders as a foundation for some of the material they will begin to learn as high school students. Finally, to further their comfort level with reading and pronouncing Hebrew words, the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade students will begin the year with a brief prayer review, but then move on to basic conversational Hebrew.

## B'NAI MITZVAH

In order to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple B'nai Torah, one must be enrolled and attend a minimum of two years in the TBT Religious School. This includes fulfilling the Iyyun T'filah requirement (explained further in the "Policies" section).

Families receive B'nai Mitzvah dates during the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade year. The dates are assigned as close to a child's thirteenth birthday as possible and may, depending on the size of the class, be a shared date with another family. A B'nai Mitzvah Orientation is held during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year to further prepare students and parents for the process of becoming B'nai Mitzvah.

One on one lessons begin six to seven months prior to the B'nai Mitzvah date. Students begin study with four sessions with Cantor Timman and then are assigned a tutor for the remainder of their studies until rehearsals begin with first Cantor Timman, and then Rabbi Bar-Nahum. Approximately six weeks before the B'nai Mitzvah date, students are also expected to attend four speech meetings with Rabbi Bar-Nahum. A B'nai Mitzvah Handbook which outlines the specific requirements for the entire process is distributed at the orientation in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.

Temple B'nai Torah strives to meet the needs of individual students and to respond to special needs.

## POST B'NAI MITZVAH LEARNING

Our "Hebrew High School" program will allow our teens to grow:

1. as individuals.
2. as part of the Temple B'nai Torah Community.
3. as participants in the larger Jewish world.

8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students begin the evening with leveled learning, in order to maximize the educational value of their time spent in the Hebrew High program.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Leadership and Jewish History**

In their first year post B'nai Mitzvah, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students will learn about the experience of the Jewish people (including the founding of Israel) ultimately through an exploration of their own family histories. This will help students to begin to form their personal Jewish identities, as well as teach them a basic history of the Jews and Israel. They will also learn how to be leaders in the Jewish community through a series of experiential lessons that they will design and teach.

### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade – Comparative Religion and Ethics**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade students will learn about Judaism as compared to other major world religions. They will learn what makes Jews Jews and why we do the things we do. They will also study Jewish ethics, learning the biblical and Talmudic responses to everyday and modern issues. This will help to give them a better understanding of what it means to be a Jew as they prepare for their confirmation year.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Grade – Confirmation**

Students spend the year studying with Rabbi Bar-Nahum, as they study theology (in both a broad and personal sense), various Jewish texts, commandments and mitzvot, their relationship with God, and so much more. Confirmation students also have the opportunity to attend the annual trip to the L'Taken Seminar at the Religious Action Center in Washington DC, where they meet teens from all over the country, see the sights, and learn about various social and political issues. At the culmination of the trip, they are given the opportunity to lobby their local congressmen and state senators on Capitol Hill. This year's trip will take place from February 28<sup>th</sup> – March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The culmination of the Confirmation program features the students leading a beautiful Shavuot service and receiving a blessing from the Clergy as they affirm their faith in Judaism.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Grade – Comparative Judaism and Jewish Media**

In this post-confirmation year, students learn about the different branches of Judaism to better understand what makes us Reform Jews. To illustrate this in a fun way, students will explore different types of Judaism in media - including literature, movies, and television – to see how each sect is represented in popular culture.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade – Graduation**

Each week, the senior class will meet with Morah Sheryl and another teacher as we explore what it means to be Jewish in the world. As our oldest students get ready to head out to college, many leaving home for the first time, we discuss a variety of topics including everything from how to make responsible choices to how to live with a roommate, all through a Jewish lens. For the last few sessions, we work together as a group to apply all we have learned to create a beautiful graduation service.

### **All grades**

As believers in experiential learning, students may periodically meet off site to participate in social action projects or other external opportunities. Parents will be notified well in advance of these events.

### **Electives**

Electives are based on the interests of the students and the specialties of the faculty.

Outside resources will be included in the electives when possible. Students will change electives approximately twice per year.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students will have the opportunity to join the electives for the last three sessions of the school year.

### **Special Needs**

Temple B'nai is an inclusive learning environment and experience. The individual child's needs can be best accommodated by a partnership between the school and the family. Please share any information you may have regarding developmental or learning differences or difficulties in order to facilitate a positive learning environment. If there is additional information which would be helpful in improving your child's experience at Religious School, please reach out to Sheryl Gordon to discuss.

## **FACULTY**

Our faculty consists of experienced and dedicated individuals who work with our educational leadership team in developing interactive, informative and engaging learning experiences. Faculty members are asked to communicate regularly with the parents to engage them as partners in the educational process.

Temple B'nai Torah strives to instill a respect for every person through words, action and deeds. Kavod LaBriyot (respect for humanity) is a guiding principle. We maintain a zero tolerance policy for bullying, abuse, or a lack of respect for community or personal property.

## **PARENTS**

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's Jewish education by joining the PTA, participating in family education programming, and attending and sharing in congregational events including holiday and Shabbat celebrations.

Due to the limited amount of time students spend here at TBT, we cannot claim to be more than a supplement to the Jewish life our students experience apart from our building. To provide a complete Jewish education means to provide opportunities in the home for children to utilize what they learn in Religious School. For example, participation in Jewish rituals at home, attendance at services, participation in activities related to supporting the Jewish community, and conversations about Jewish topics are all encouraged outside of school hours.

We strongly encourage you to question your child about the content of their class and help them be responsible about reviewing at home between classes. Keep in touch with your child's teacher and join us when you are invited into the classroom.

You can best help your child benefit from their Religious School experience by making sure that they arrive at school on time, adhere to the attendance policy, and come to class prepared.

## SCHOOL POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend a minimum of 80% of all scheduled classes. If your child will be absent for any reason, please alert their teacher via email, or call the Religious School office to alert us to their absence. We are first and foremost concerned with the safety of your child and want to make sure we are aware if they will not be present. Any work your child misses during a regular session will be assigned as makeup work in order to make sure that your child does not fall behind, and we ask that you be a partner in ensuring that such work is completed. We of course understand that your child may have multiple commitments, but ask that you work with us to make sure that they attend class consistently.

If you or your child has scheduling conflicts, please contact Sheryl Gordon (sgordon@tbtwantagh.org) as soon as possible to discuss.

### **Iyyun T'filah**

There are approximately nine designated Iyyun Tefillah services which occur approximately once per month throughout the school year. The service dates are chosen by the Clergy and Educator to ensure that students and families are exposed to a variety of Shabbat services and Jewish experiences throughout the year including, but not limited to, Kabalat, special music, festivals, liturgy, Jewish life cycle rituals, and guest speakers. Families will be notified of the dates of each designated service at the beginning of the year.

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Students are expected to attend at least six of the nine services. If for some reason a family is unable to fulfill this requirement as it is scheduled, they are to speak with the Clergy as soon as possible to come up with an appropriate make-up schedule. Attendance at Family Services, while encouraged, will not be counted towards Iyyun Tefillah service attendance unless specifically noted on the schedule. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students are also required to attend 4 Shabbat Morning Services at TBT.

Students should fill out a Shabbat Service Study Page found outside the sanctuary after each Shabbat service that they attend and hand it to the Rabbi with an appropriate Shabbat Greeting before you leave. This information is transferred to a log that is kept in the Religious School office.

### **Behavior and Discipline**

We wish to promote a pleasant and cooperative atmosphere in the school that encourages each child to do their best. To that end, each teacher is asked to work with their students to create a "Class Brit" (agreement/contract) that reflects these values. Class rules will require that students be respectful of each other and each other's property. Students must show respect for teachers, staff members, and other adults. Our primary concern is maintaining the safety and well-being of students and staff in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Teachers have the right to expect suitable behavior in the classroom and appropriate use of the physical environment. Failure to adhere to these expectations will result in incremental steps of logical consequences.



### **Homework**

All teachers bear in mind the heavy loads our students carry, yet some home review is necessary. Students benefit from a regular review of Hebrew a few minutes each day. We ask that you sit with your child while they review; even if you cannot read Hebrew, it is helpful to the student to practice aloud with another person as they are more likely to catch their own mistakes. On occasion, students may have written work to prepare, though it should never take more than 10-15 minutes to complete.

### **Class Preparation**

Students should arrive for class with all necessary materials, including paper, pencils, and any necessary textbooks. It is essential that students bring their books to class, as they will be used regularly. It is suggested that each student maintain a Religious School folder or backpack to accompany them to class to handle these items.

### **Evaluation**

Each student is evaluated at the beginning of the year by one of our two Hebrew tutors to assess who may need some extra help. If it is determined by both the teacher and the tutor that a particular student would benefit from one-on-one or small group tutoring, they will be pulled from their regularly scheduled class for approximately 15 minutes once or twice per week. Your child's teacher should notify you if your child is receiving the extra tutoring. It is our goal to ensure the success of every child.

## **TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES**

### **Drop-off**

1. Enter the parking lot from Oakfield Avenue ONLY (at the side of Temple).
2. Keep left and enter the designated drop-off lane.
3. Proceed to the east doors of the School wing. These will be the only entrance doors open at the beginning of each school session. These doors will be open 8:45am – 9:15am Sunday mornings, 6:15 – 6:45pm Monday evenings, 4:15pm – 4:45pm Wednesday afternoons, and 6:15 – 6:45pm Wednesday evenings. *If your child arrives after the doors have been closed, they will need to be buzzed in from the back parking lot entrance doors.*
4. Stop your vehicle and discharge your passengers. Do not proceed until all of your passengers are on the sidewalk.
5. Exit by making a right turn into the marginal road.

\*\*If there is a need to escort your child into the building, please park your vehicle and using the sidewalk, enter with the student through the east doors of the school wing.

### **Pick-Up**

Students will be dismissed from the main front doors of the Temple. Parents, guardians, or carpools should park on the marginal road that runs parallel to Jerusalem Avenue, exit your car, and wait under the overhang at the front of the building to pick up your students. In an effort to make sure we know that all students are safely collected and have been picked up by an individual listed on the registration form, we ask that you check in with each teacher as you pick up your students; it is imperative that we know each child has been safely picked up.

### **Early Dismissal**

On occasions when your child must be picked up early from class, please enter the building and go to the Religious School office to sign them out. Parents/guardians must sign out each child who will be leaving early. The student(s) will be brought to you by either the Religious School Secretary or one of the madrichim. **Please do not go to your child's class or try to remove them directly from the classroom. No child will be dismissed until they have been signed out.**

### **SCHOOL CLOSING**

If it becomes necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather, or for any other reason, school closing announcements will be sent out via email or text. Our voicemail system will also announce the school closing and the closing will be listed on the following:

News 12 Long Island (Television and [www.news12.com](http://www.news12.com))  
Temple B'nai Torah Facebook page

### **SNACK POLICY**

Some teachers choose to include snack time into their routine. To ensure the safety of students with severe allergies, **the Religious School at TBT is a nut-sensitive environment**, which means that we do not serve any food containing peanuts or tree nuts. If you choose to send a snack to school with your child, we ask that you read the labels of the products to ensure that the product **DOES NOT CONTAIN PEANUTS OR TREE NUTS**. We also ask that you adhere to the temple's kosher-style food policy and refrain from sending anything containing pork or shellfish to school.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you for trusting us with your children. We hope to have an amazing, fun, safe, and educational year together as we work as a community to teach your children how to become the incredible Jews they are bound to be.

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